September 11 Commission Investigation incl. John Judge and Ray McGovern (2004)

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July 22, 2004 | The co-founders of the 9/11 Citizens Watch issued a critique of the September 11 Commission's report released today. The organization monitored the work of the commission and conducted its own parallel investigation, saying that the commission was not independent and that the commission's investigative standards were too low. Victims' family members also spoke. After the presentations the participants answered reporters' questions.

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25 years tables gift to America shortly before the September 11 Commission made its report public today a citizens group released a critique of that report this briefing by 911 citizens watch is one hour welcome first I'd like to take a moment to thank c-span for covering our press conference today also our thanks go out to the National Press Club we're hosting the event and to our club sponsor John Edward Hurley so thank you for being here and taking note of the work of 9/11 citizens watch thank you especially to all our fellow researchers investigative journalists and supporters who've contribute in one fashion or another to our parallel investigation of 9/11 and the concurrent oversight of the National Commission on terrorists acts upon the United States otherwise known as the 9/11 Commission we've done this over the past year and a half my name is Kyle hence I'm co-founder with John Judge of 9/11 citizens watch you'll find our BIOS in your press kits and those of our guest speakers here today you can find us on the web at WWF and citizens watch org first a brief history about an organization we founded citizens watch March 31st of last year 2003 in New York City at the time and place of the very first hearing held by the 9/11 Commission we came together with a mission to monitor the work of the 9/11 Commission and that of a growing community of independent truly independent researchers and investigators who have been closely examining the events of and surrounding the attacks of 9/11 in so doing we've identified emerging evidence evidence neglected in large part by the 9/11 Commission that one this Commission is

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Commission that one this Commission is anything but independent to its integrity has been deeply compromised due to a failure to apply a high investigative standard play hardball and demand accountability of military officials and if Democrats and Republicans alike and three and perhaps most importantly the unsubstantiated simplistic official story offered us for what happened does not stand up under scrutiny and further we've denta fide considerable prima facie evidence though largely circumstantial should still lead any prudent investigator or prosecutor worth his salt to seriously allow for at least the possibility of a wider circle complicity than the 19 identified by the Justice Department immediately after 9/11 that there was perhaps inside facilitation funding or even implementation of the attacks by as-yet-unidentified co-conspirators this for us is the elephant in the room a body of evidence that many fear acknowledging even looking at and understandably confronting it is our challenge now all of us to speak out and bleed and lend the highest

degree of scrutiny to the commission's report that's coming out today and to this growing body of evidence compiled by independent investigators and the witnesses and witnesses largely ignored to date so now with the Commission having concluded as public hearings and their issuance of the final report today our work truly begins in earnest we are plea to see that such interest in the prelude to our final report this one dealing mostly with process this the final report issued before 9/11 of this year will be more a substantive analysis once we've had a chance to review the Commission's final report given the catalogue of compromises flawed premises conflicts of interest unanswered

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conflicts of interest unanswered questions neglected areas of inquiry and ignored whistleblowers we have drawn a most reasonable and fully justified conclusion that the report being released today by this so-called independent commission cannot possibly be defamed deemed definitive or authoritative as an account for the events of September 11th not by any stretch of the imagination and given the resistance obstructions foot-dragging by the White House and other government age sees through the course of the investigation particularly by NORAD the Department of Justice it is clear that most of the professionals and officials in positions of responsibility at the time of 9/11 would have preferred no investigation whatsoever into the murder of 3,000 people from over 80 nations but alas they got one when the victim families members fought long and hard for unfortunately we expect that they will what they will get in the end is a whitewash and when most Americans we feel should greet as a farce and out-and-out cover-up and a shameful colossal spin job let us mince no words our final purport drawn from a variety of sources will release substantiate these strong words and challenge to the work of this commission the first our first report given the fact that we have not yet seen the Commission report is primarily a detailed critique of the deeply fraud investigative process itself and deals primarily with the first two points I just mentioned leaving the disturbing analysis and implications of later probing report focusing on more substance and content now I'd like to turn to co-founder citizens watch John judge who will shed some light and and share with us some specific details contained in our report being released today John judge morning we have prepared this citizens critique of the Commission's process and it's fairly clear to us that the process

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it's fairly clear to us that the process haven't been flawed that we anticipate that the report that issues from the Commission will be similarly flawed compared to other investigations of major historical incidents like Pearl Harbor the assassination of John F Kennedy or the shuttle Challenger this Commission was from the beginning minimally funded and pushed into a very tight timeslot compared to most of those other investigations and that forced it into we believe a rush to judgment it did get an extension of time and wanted to go to January of next year and got two more months and finished its work within a schedule that had more to do with the elections we believe then had to do with the the investigation and the probative questions themselves it took its cues from the joint inquiry by the House and Senate intelligence committees but they set a premise of an intelligence failure and that was their focus and this Commission followed in those footsteps in large part and it was funded founded with the law and that put obstacles in its way as well from our point of view as well as being obstructed from its inception by the White House and the executive agencies and there were serious compromises made with those agencies in terms of how they would get testimony what documents they would have access to all sorts of conditions on whether or not particular people would testify and what record will be made of those testimonies over a thousand people have been interviewed we are told most of them not under oath in the beginning none of their public testimony was taken under oath until families and citizens watch and other groups complained and we have no idea what the recording of that will be for instance we're told that condo leases rice rice is for our private testimony with the Commission there is no record no recording no transcript and only notes that survived the Commission was

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notes that survived the Commission was also caught in a conundrum that many investigations are in the current period that in order to for the national security state to investigate any major incident it can only vet those people that are already part of that system in large part to take a look at that system because they're the only ones in this in the society that are allowed to see into it and so there was there was no one put on the commission from a totally independent position of family members put on there and some of the people had conflicts or potential conflicts of interests that concerned the families and and the citizen groups chairman Thomas Thomas keen had financial ties with Amerada Hess oil and at one point was in a in a joint operation with with Osama bin Laden's brother-in-law and he was also connected with the National Endowment for democracy which has taken over historically from the USAID in terms of carrying on covert operations on behalf of US intelligence agencies abroad similarly other members were parts of earlier flawed investigations into conjugating Watergate they sit on military Pentagon and intelligence advisory boards for the most part they have they have ties into the past including the the Nixon resignation period one of them was even accused by students of being deep throat in the Watergate situation and their executive director was so conflicted that the families called for his resignation and his work on the Kennedy tapes on the Bay of Pigs was so sloppily done that the director of the Kennedy Center said that no scholar student could rely on him and yet we have to rely on the notes that he took at the presidential hearing in terms of what we're going to do he was co-authored a book with Condoleezza Rice it came to the family's attention that he was part of the transition team into the bush house for the National Security Council in

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the National Security Council in addition to that the flawed premises of the other report we believe will go nowhere outside the official story for instance one of the investigative teams was called alt al-qaeda and the Qataris plot it wasn't called who's behind 9/11 it named the suspect in the beginning of its investigation and the procedures that the Commission followed involved a lack of transparency an inability to bring forward or willingness to bring forward alternative witnesses or points of view even on public policy issues a process that left a lack of accountability of the people in the government agencies and that suffered under the excessive secrecy of the Bush administration with evidence some evidence destroyed and much evidence concealed and to date no release of non classified evidence to back up the claims of the report there are several key omissions and contradictions in the report we believe from the testimony that we've seen and the public statements of the staff and some of the major areas that we think are not going to be covered are the historical context in Afghanistan and the u.s. covert operations there and what led into the roots of the al-qaida that the the background on even the suspects themselves has not been clarified their identities or what a letter who might be the actual sponsors of the event the foreknowledge and for warnings that were given were not taken into serious account at the at the hearings at least in addition to that the response of NORAD and FAA they had two hearings out of 19 on this topic and left with a timeline that still is muddled and contradicts the earlier timeline and doesn't make sense in terms of responses to just give you one understanding in relation to that they keep talking about this was a hijacking and they were waiting to hear if it was

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and they were waiting to hear if it was a hijacking and until they found that out that planes didn't go up to scramble it was an unprecedented event it was planes used as weapons which hadn't been seen before an air emergency begins when the transponder goes off and the communication with tower ends it begins when the plane goes off course it begins when it doesn't respond to tower commands that's the point at which flap goes communication goes back to the FAA headquarters the liaisons there get get online with NORAD and plane go up within six to ten minutes 67 times in the year prior to this the FAA and NORAD system worked in that set in that way in a timely fashion to scramble planes and air emergencies but work not at all on November on on September the 11th that that year and another area that we felt because it's a commission point of on terrorist acts and could have included additional terrorist acts in its scope that it should have addressed the anthrax attacks an investigation that's stalled basically at the foot gate of Fort Detrick and and hasn't picked up since their policy recommendations which was the bulk of their hearings were held and

discussed before the events the day were clarified so rather than moving from historical fact to policy the opposite happened the hearings that they did have on policy as far as we can see are going to extenuate and replicate what we think has been a flawed policy in general of response to terrorism a domestic policy international law permanent war economy and many of the excesses on civil liberties that followed after 9/11 that those will not be challenged so that's some of the points that are made in this 63 page report and as I say we were in the position of critiquing it before it comes out so we can't tell you exactly what's in it but keen had said that not to expect surprises and that it would merely fill in a few gaps from what we'd already seen so we brought our critique based on watching them very closely over

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based on watching them very closely over these months and going to all the hearings and reading through all the testimony well thank you John now I'd like to invite Matthew cielito Matthew lost his son Matthew Cecil Ito who is 23 years old he worked for Cantor Fitzgerald Matthew thank you for being here thank you for letting me come up because I have to leave here right after I get done speaking to go to a preview of the Commission report as a family member that's involved with the 9/11 families United to bankrupt terror first I'd like to tell you as a family member I think this nation owes a debt of gratitude to the families of 9/11 because if it weren't for them this commission would not be here today i Matthew cielito feel this nation owes a debt of gratitude to Tom Kane because I kind of think the administration thought they were going to get a whitewash and some people may still think it's a whitewash but I feel Tom Kane did a great job and holding the committee together and getting to the bottom as far as he could to the test that was given to them and remember what the task was find out what happened how it happened and prevent it from ever happening again and they gave that committee a budget of three million dollars now I'm not from Washington DC you you people are what is yeah the most

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you you people are what is yeah the most devastating thing that ever happened on our soil and you're charging a committee to find out how it won't happen again and give them a budget of three million dollars is ridiculous through family pressure through the press it was gotten up to 15 million dollars which we again Oh a debt of gratitude to the families things that I were disappointed in is the president who was our leader after the most dastardly thing on our soil ever happened had to be forced through families in the press to have this committee he had to be forced to have his cabinet people testify on this committee he himself said he would not testify in front of the committee but through family pressure through the press he not only had his cabinet people speak in front of him but he himself spoke in front of them the time limit was pushed why because family members through the press put pressure on the point is as the leader of our nation at a time that 9/11 happened I would think that he would be in the forefront leading and demanding and giving as much time that's needed to find out how something like this is going to be prevented from happening again one of the disheartening things that I go through is that again I'm part of this lawsuit of 9/11

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I'm part of this lawsuit of 9/11 families United to bankrupt terrorism we have 17 countries cooperating with us I'll name a few Spain Germany Italy on and on and on opening up their books showing us how money was funneled to the terrorists yet when we go to our State Department they will not say one thing to us as Americans I fought as an American I find that disheartening I think you as Americans should find that disheartening why would the rest of the world want to cooperate with us and we can't get past first base with our own State Department and administration so in conclusion I'd like to say I think the committee did a good job one that it was given the task of finding out what happened I think Tom Kane that is stellar job and I think the families truly should be admired by the rest of the country because all we tried to do you know my son is gone but we as family members wanted this to happen so your child your mother your father won't be taken

the next time this happens and we'll be prepared I want to thank this group for giving me time to speak and I thank you very much for listening thank you very much thank you very much Matthew Knight now to an introduce on a

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Matthew Knight now to an introduce on a 27 excuse me I'd like to now introduce Jules Aronson Jules is also a victim family member he lost his sister Myra on flight 11 Jules no thank you I just have a few few remarks obviously I I haven't read the report so I'm not going to comment about the contents but what I want to focus on is is the subject of the climate that may have led to the 9/11 tragedy that is we all know now that there are multitudes in the Middle East in particular the Muslim world that really really hate us and I don't think this question has really been adequately addressed it's it of course it's important it's important to do practical things to combat the terrorism and maybe from a military point of view but we'll never get rid of this hatred and this which which generates many recruits to terrorism unless we address this question so so what what is the host what I would like to hope they committed commission would have done was to address the historical content context of the 9/11 tragedy that is what what what have we done to aid al-qaeda or its predecessors and as I said why why do the multitudes of Muslims really nearly hate us and this

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Muslims really nearly hate us and this this of course is a complex question I think unless we look at our policies both now and what we have done in the past to to create this climate the war on terrorism will never end in fact it looks now with the war in Iraq and that it's getting even worse and so you know I think I think the commission from what I know of the testimony and probability has done a very good job in general there there's in I think it unfortunately in reaching a compromise they may have missed some critical points but I but I don't think this question really has been addressed and I and I really feel that aside from you know practical points of you know such as trying trying to trace the people who are involved in fostering this terrorism in 911 that you know if we really had what we really need to do now is to look at our policies and our you know and and what we are doing as a nation to foster this you know I think I think our leadership really doesn't understand other cultures and in so doing this they are they're really making things worse so these this is just my my point of view and I want to thank the members here and for inviting me I'd like to bring up now a 27 year veteran an analyst with the CIA Ray McGovern

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I should make clear although it's probably clear for my appearance that I'm retired from the CIA I'm no longer active work working there there is a short squib that I wrote it's on the back of this one which you might miss in your packet so I'll go lightly over what that says and just to make a few general observations I think it's really important to remember with respect to the genesis of this report that it was resisted mightily as John has already said by the administration Dick Cheney at first said that if there were any kind of Commission like this he the White House might refuse to send anyone over to testify and then when it was the pressure grew for some kind of inquiry into this terrible event he acquiesced or he and Bush acquiesced and the appointment of a joint congressional committee because Cheney saw that he could control that through his cat's paw reporter Goss the head of the House Intelligence Committee and indeed he did so most flagrantly when there was a leak not necessarily from the committee but Cheney persuaded Gus and Bob Graham to send the FBI in an unprecedented violation of the separate of power separation of powers having the FBI part of the administrative the executive branch investigate Committees of Congress committees by the way responsible for overseeing the activities of the FBI so that that's part of the the background here that I think we really have to realize is is in the woodwork all right good thank you yeah that committee of course the joint congressional committee issued its

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congressional committee issued its report its final report at the end of 2002 but when it had the public hearing in September Eleanor Hill the executive director a very gutsy lady a very competent lady formerly Inspector General the Pentagon stopped all the proceedings in the beginning and said now I have to tell you folks something very important before we proceed and that is that negotiations that the white house went well into the evening and we failed we failed to get White House and Central Intelligence Agency approval to mention anything in this report anything having to do with what the president was told prior to 9/11 even if that information is already publicly available we were forbidden to include that in our report okay and indeed when the report came out at the end of the year not a word on that continuity look at the Senate Intelligence Committee report from two weeks ago same thing they draw the line at what the president did with the intelligence information that he had so this is a very important point because if you don't look into this then you know nobody's responsible Harry Truman said the buck stops here well that seems to have been long forgotten by President Bush who says he really respects Harry Truman there is no accountability the president has said that he's never well he can't recall ever having made a mistake well let me tell you folks that settled that filters right down to the lowest gs3 working in the federal system and that kind of example is what causes things like the the incredible malfeasance and misfeasance that attended the intelligence and law enforcement performance having to do with 9/11 so so don't be taken in all right what what the what the we already know enough about what the report says what it says is that you know there were mistakes made there were ten missed

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mistakes made there were ten missed opportunities well parenthetically I would say that this is the 11th okay this report is the 11th missed opportunity but nobody really was responsible it was the system it had to be a system and so what we're gonna do is we're gonna fix the system we're tweak it we're gonna in my view rearrange the director of central intelligence chair on the deck of the Titanic and move it up one tier okay none of that is necessary what you need is integrity what you need is encount ability I've seen that the system work and one of the things that really grates me is that not one of the commission members has any intelligence community experience whatsoever you've heard it said already and it's true that this is not an independent commission okay not only that it's not a representative commission everyone on that commission looks exactly like me except one woman a token woman okay all are either lawyers or politicians some are both my grandmother used to talk about the upper crust well that's what we have here the ruling class the royal class reminds me very much of Lord Hutton and Lord Butler both of all both of whom ran their own inquiries and came up with the correct answer the correct answer being mistakes were made it's a collective sort of problem that no one person no one individual is responsible that leads to disaster as we have seen the last thing is stress that no one on the Commission do anything about intelligence and let me just finish up

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intelligence and let me just finish up by stressing what I think is going to be very interesting and no one here I think has read the report yet but in view of what I've said about information being prohibited with respect to what the president knew before 9/11 it's going to be very interesting to see how the Commission finesses this problem no it's it's thoroughly politicized the Commission that it's it's acutely partisan so how are they going to parse this how are they going to to face this very delicate issue we all know that the president was given copious warnings before 9/11 in the spring and summer of 2001 and how are they going to finesse that with the reality that neither the president nor his National Security Advisor know what to do could he not have delayed his vacation a day or two could he not have gotten together with his national security advisors could they not have warned the airlines and the airports in a more definitive way so it's going to be very interesting to see how they come out on that but that's that's that's where the where it hits the fan and I think that I can predict very confidently that just as the British in a very gentle and gentlemanly sort of due deference professional courtesy sort of way after all most of them are lawyers they will come up with what is indelicately called a whitewash a last word here and that is that I'm just delighted that Jules mentioned the historical

context because as is well known if you wish to combat terrorism well it's just like you know just like defeating malaria everyone knows that to defeat malaria you set up short shooters around the swamp and you try to kill as

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around the swamp and you try to kill as many mosquitoes as you can flying out of the swamp that's how you defeat malaria right right well how do you defeat terrorism folks you don't to feed them the Rumsfeld way by killing as many as you can defeat him by asking what makes these people hate us what makes these people hate us and it's not our democracy and it's not our freedom it's our policy stupid it's our policy it's our tanks it's our helicopter gunships that our bulldozing Palestinian homes it's our tanks that support Ariel Sharon the Irish feel real strongly about that and I would too and that's the that's the basic one invading Iraq certainly didn't help and Ariel Sharon is as much responsible for that decision and his his supporters in our government as as is anyone else because as you probably know if you look closely the so-called neo cons have great difficulty distinguishing between what they perceive to be the strategic vision the strategic needs of Israel and the strategic needs of our country thank you very much thank you Ray in just a minute we're gonna open up to questions but I want to acknowledge the statements that are in your press kits one from Bill Doyle who lost his son Joseph has a statement we'll be posting this on our website for those who who are interested but an interest of time we want to turn it over questions also Judith Jackson Reese sent us a statement and we want I want to thank both Judith and Bill for doing so again we'll post that on our web site wwhen Swach org I before I turn this over to questions one last thing we would like to make a call to any whistleblowers any members of government

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whistleblowers any members of government former members of government who have something to say about the events of 9/11 in response to this Commission to come forward to the press to our organization Daniel Ellsberg is running a project called the whistleblower project the truth-telling project and he too is doing the same relative to Iraq and 9/11 so with that I thank you for your patience and thank you for being here and we'll take questions too to all of us here thank you very much there is a wireless handheld and if you will wait for Arielle before asking your question we'd Mary much appreciate that thank you very much Chris strong with the the National Journal um what what are the maybe the the three most important class unanswered questions that you see at this point based on the research that you've done that you don't feel that the 91 report is going to answer what are those questions that you feel that are not being answered to be that the American public should know well first I'd like to reiterate what John raised and mentioned in the our report being released today and that is the fact that they completely excluded an examination of the anthrax attacks and the reason why we particularly feel that that was unwarranted is that on the morning or rather the day of September 11th someone had members of the White House staff Cheney's office I believe at first begin taking cipro on the morning of September 11th thereby making it an integral part of the attacks of 9/11 because there were some intelligence some warning that was only passed on to White House officials but not to the postal workers that were later killed as a result of the attacks four weeks later that's one example another one is there's been no adequate explanation for why it is that Air Force jet fighters strip alert on strip alert here in the DC area we're able to defend the skies here in the

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able to defend the skies here in the area known as P 56 which is the zone over the Capitol the White House and so on the nation's capitol there's been no adequate explanation we understand that there were three jets on from Andrews that were on a an exercise over the over North Carolina independent of the simultaneous that were that happening that day and and yet when I asked this of Jamie Gorelick there was no comment so this is an area that I hope the press will get some scrutiny to so the anthrax questions about the response from the Andrews Air Force Base John do you have any tat the anthrax matter was a New York Times article that revealed in what was called bungling by the FBI or missteps in the investigation that during the time

between the mailing of the first anthrax envelopes and the first person who ended up sick from them down in Florida the FBI had contacted the University of Iowa at Ames and in the discussion with them there was an agreement made to destroy a 70 year old archive of all known strains of the patent a chiral pathogen anthrax with it which they had kept there at Ames and when the DNA work was done on the anthrax samples they were identified as Ames strain now had that archive been kept the DNA could have traced it to a particular batch or strain and then that batch would have had a paper trail as to where that anthrax had been sent for research either for cure or for weaponization but also the weaponization level is so sophisticated that it clearly led back to us us Amrit or the Fort Detrick and some other bases included the primarily Detrick that do

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included the primarily Detrick that do research on bio weapons on September the 9th the day just two days before the attack the Defense Intelligence Agency held a press briefing here in DC announcing that under project Jefferson and the DIA they had developed on Rumsfeld's request the next generation of anthrax genetically altered more resistant to antibiotic and more weaponized version of anthrax which matches what was in these envelopes and in that investigation stop there the other major area the third area that we were bringing up today it's not the only ones mentioned are a report but we think it important is the one that Ray and Jules were addressing the historical context of the creation of the Mujahideen and the covert operation that it represented and the funding of that operation which came through both Saudi Arabia and the United States intelligence agencies and Pakistani intelligence BCCI the bank for and commerce international and those elements were also similarly around the funding of the other major covert operation period contra gate and these were off-the-shelf or clandestine operations run by William Casey during the Reagan and Bush years the plan started actually under Carter and Britta's insky but that's really what led to the training camps and the building up of Islamic militants now Brzezinski says that he thought it was a great idea at the time he has no reason to apologize he said what are a few startup Muslims compared to the fall of the Soviet Union but I think some Americans have an answer to that question now the other item which is somewhat related is the the what we feel is the lack of inquiry hearing from witnesses relative to $100,000 wire transfer that was reportedly approved by the head of the Pakistani intelligence agency the ISI and that this hundred thousand dollar wire transfer was made to otta in advance of the attacks so

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to otta in advance of the attacks so this is a trail that we believe Daniel Pearl was following when which led to his death his his widow I understand has asked about this and would like to to see a Khalid Sheikh Mohammed who is also tied in with this who allegedly slits Daniel pearls throat brought brought to justice but Khalid Sheikh Mohammed on which the Commission bases much of its new information has been held in an undisclosed location now for over a year and certainly any kind of information coming from someone who's been held in an undisclosed location probably tortured or drugged is a questionable integrity I'd like to know how many of you have heard of spike Bowman nobody spike Bowman was the FBI senior lawyer who spiked the mini Annapolis Office initiative to get access to moussaoui's computer and so forth this was weeks before 9/11 they had Musa he was one of the fellows that was training for air flight flight training in Minneapolis spike Bowman was the person who refused permission for them to do that had they been able to do that before 9/11 rather than after 9/11 this could have been prevented this is the clearest instance that we have now spike Bowman was given a cash award signed by the president barely a year later $20,000 and praised for his contribution to the security of United States citizens I want to know why that happen everyone knows what he did why did they give him an award barely a year later there's been a great pattern of awarding failure in the wake of 9/11 and as you know I think that their it merits a deeper look at some of the mounting

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a deeper look at some of the mounting body of evidence that suggests a wider circle of complicity I'm sorry take another question please I wish you identify yourself sure Jeremiah McWilliams with ABC News you said that the official story for what happened on 9/11 does not stand up to scrutiny and early in the report I think

on a related note it seems to suggest that the official case against Osama bin Laden is incomplete or weak could you clarify for us what you mean by the official story does not stand up to scrutiny well it starts with the 19 suspects and the problem is okay the problem there is that the International Press BBC and other sources reported that up to seven of the suspects were still alive based on the fact that people came forward with the same ID and name and matching photo photographs and said that's me it's my ID but I wasn't on the plane and so we began with a group of suspects who are operating on our false ID those names have never been changed they were supposedly based on information from the airline manifests that were released but I went to those releases very early on and they do not contain any of the names of the suspects each manifest is short four or five names and so we have no way to match even the airline manifests with the official story of who the suspects are if these suspects are carrying other ID which is not unthinkable in a criminal situation then how can we rely on a story of who that ID was in the past in other words we say this is the person's name and identity and this is what they were doing here and there that ID could also have been passed to other people so yeah that's a way in a covert operation that you create what's called a legend and and you and you can set somebody up or give blame to somebody or create false sponsorship for an event so first of all I would say we don't know who the people are second their pattern

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who the people are second their pattern of activity does not seem to match people operating in the way they're supposed to be they're making themselves very visible there were numerous calls and complaints about them where they lived and where they dealt with things or reports them going to bars and drinking doing illegal drugs you know certainly certainly not following a pattern seems to be devout Muslims but but rather people a lot of money and a lot of background and I think there's also a question you have to consider about whether it's feasible to get groups of people over periods of time to agree to suicide missions one person yes but even in the Khobar bombing if you remember two people were in the bombing truck one jumped out at the last minute and that's not uncommon in suicide pacts much less 19 people agreeing to kill themselves all at once and break a bunch of people with them and and so what happened on the planes we still don't know and if this is what it appears to be a very sophisticated covert operation its sponsorship is going to be covered by definition from public view and so we feel that indications that were mentioned in the joint inquiry report that there were other countries involved the 28 pages you may remember that were redacted so we couldn't know who they were the wink and nod of Bob Graham that this was Saudi Arabia and now the denial that Saudi Arabia was involved no word of Pakistan or whether it was involved or whether other countries could have been involved in this operation I'm just saying that there's box cutters and knives the whole story just has a lot of flaws and a lot of pieces that were never followed up on and we were also promised a white paper by Colin Powell if you remember about the guilt and that was never given to the American public was some facts were released to the British and they said it's not enough to go to court it's enough to go to war but I think the case on bin Laden I'm not

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I think the case on bin Laden I'm not saying he's an innocent party but we really don't have a saw in most of what we have now linking all these things to bin Laden is is the testimony of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed who no one can see except authorities and no one knows whether whether he's you know at Abu gorab where he's being held is he being tortured are these legitimate confessions do they actually have Khalid Sheikh Mohammed there was some question in the international press about that when he was arrested so we're having to base a lot of this on on sources and investigations that we can't know very much about and I think that a real scrutiny of it suggests that you've got a broader sponsorship here than we're understanding as yet the the men the transfer of funds that Kyle mentions is important because the ISI in Pakistan was the main conduit of American funds to the Afghan resistance and so this is an instance where somebody's passing money out of Pakistani ISI in August of 2001 - one of the main masterminds of the plot through international channels not setting off the normal banking alarm bills for $100,000 transfer somehow and in passing it through some intermediaries and then afterwards he is removed from his position at the ISI on his return to Pakistan from the United States for being too close to bin Laden and for this transfer while he was here he

met with Colin Powell Richard Armitage George Tenet at the CIA Porter Goss and Bob Graham on the morning of the event and he had clearly ongoing ties with US intelligence as well we don't really know when US intelligence connections to the Taliban two of the Afghan resistance to the Islamic militants have started much less ended and whether or not there are elements within the US intelligence community that saw elements within that resistance as negative assets that they could use

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as negative assets that they could use for international purposes that may or may not have gotten out of control in the situation a Billiken affiliated with washington independent writers of if you each were putting yourselves in the shoes or the minds of a terrorist or potential terrorist what area not properly or fully answered do you think would give the enemy the most reason to be relieved or glad or feeling victorious well I think the fact hasn't cracked down on the flow of the money laundering of drug proceeds from drug trafficking as was referred to by Matthew cielito a few minutes ago is is something that I would think the terrorists are very happy about because that would allow them to obviously you know continue in their efforts I think in the wake of 9/11 the response of this country relative to squashing of civil liberties this assault on the bill of rights the very foundation of what sets this country apart that that makes it a leader you know something too you know we haven't reached the ideal in terms of what we've aspired to what the founding fathers aspired to but I think in the wake of 9/11 we've seen an erosion of our civil liberties and we're being asked to sacrifice them for an illusion of security it's hard from him put myself in the mind of a terrorist but that concerns us as as an organization the the domestic response to 9/11 the excessive secrecy

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excessive secrecy you know the oppression the stifling of dissent all of these things are concerning to us if they hate us for our freedoms which I don't think is the case certainly they would rejoice over what's happening in this country a an analyst of the CIA michael Scheuer who is still in place by the way and has anonymously published that book I suggest you read that because it goes into chapter and verse as to why if you're looking at Osama bin Laden how he feels about what's happened Sawyer describes it as a kind of Christmas present that the president decided to invade Iraq after all that's where Osama bin Laden's been saying all along that the u.s. is an imperialist aggressive nation that hates Arabs will invade their countries to seize oil so we prove that when we did did all that Sawyer says there was a kind of a Christmas present to Osama bin Laden the kind of thing where you know you sort of hope all day that maybe it would eventually really don't expect it and lo and behold it happened why do I say that well of the proof is in the pudding there is a virtual war going on in Iraq now if jihad it was sumit bin Laden's purpose he's got 1 billion 1 billion Muslim fighters really geared up to fight the arch imperialists the United States which has in an unprovoked way invaded and occupied an Arab country so I think to the extent you're talking about bin Laden how he feels about this I think he's really happy about the way it seems to be evolving and I think probably enough said I just close by saying that you know when our generals went to Afghanistan to go after the

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went to Afghanistan to go after the Taliban harboring bin Laden and there and al Qaeda getting Osama bin Laden and these are the words right out of the generals mouth was never a priority and as we all know he is still free so next question please please I'm Chris you mentioned the issue of accountability and that the report is most likely gonna say if there is an across-the-board system-wide failure rather than holding individuals responsible maybe a question for mr. McGovern have you seen anywhere where you see that there's individual accountability or at least accountability in certain agencies over other agencies there was certainly the Phoenix memo memo the the Misawa investigation which which went through the Washington headquarters of the FBI and apparently wasn't was blocked right and so what can you say about where accountability should lie okay what I'll say is that you're in the weeds the president was told on August the 6th and I quote the title of the president's Daily Brief item bin Laden determined to strike in United States this was just the most recent of many very serious warnings he had a national security adviser with no

experience at all in this kind of thing it was pretty much admitted she didn't even read the file that was left behind so that she could know what was going on they didn't you know in my view the charitable explanation is they just didn't know what to do okay and so what do they do he went off on vacation she to the reports don't take my word for it see what the Richard Clarke says about this whole business hair was on fire George Tenet sear Richard Clarke's here well I was tenant not summarily dismissed after 9/11 well because he

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dismissed after 9/11 well because he almost certainly has this little this little piece of computer software or computer he's got a disk on which the 12 warnings that he issued to the president between July and August of 2001 exists in other words the president was warned so getting down to pending responsibility on the CIA or the FBI yeah there were terrible mistakes made but there certainly was enough evidence there to to require a some kind of action if only to consult his advisers at the time and for the president to say as he did yesterday that if there were the smallest inkling that such such an attack might be he would have moved quote moved heaven and earth and quote to to prevent it now that's a nice rhetorical expression but what we don't want him to move heaven and earth we just want him to talk to his advisors and figure out you know should we be doing something about this should we alert the airlines you eat other at the airport one of the points that's addressed in our report and in a there are several appendices in the report but Dan Alcorn and foi attorney here in town makes the argument that the excess of secrecy and it's gotten worse since since 9/11 of the government actually hinders the ability for us to be secure to protect ourselves and the simple point he makes is that not the details or the sources of the methods necessary to come up to the conclusion of the presidential daily briefing which is held to be secret but just the fact that bin Laden was determined to strike inside the United States could have been made public on August the 6th over a month before and might have had a much different effect on the alert of the agencies instead it was held as some

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agencies instead it was held as some super secret totally classified document that no one would ever be able to see except except George Bush and this sort of secrecy I think is exactly counterproductive to not only a democracy but but to any kind of real security and we exist in a time where our history has been buried in the national security state since 1947 actively with a huge classification bureaucracy even if you said as Clinton or Clinton tried to 30 years out documents should be released by the time the agencies involved get done vetting them the the current volume of newly classified material would catch up but even that's not enough bush administration has people going into the National Archives now and other collections reclassifying formally declassified documents it also passed an executive order that all the papers for the previous two presidencies Brazil now reside under the control of the current president so he currently controls all the papers of his father's administration and there was a battle to get those loose when he left as well as Clinton's papers and his own and so we exist in a time of increased secrecy but very little democratic or citizen participation in in a in a scenario that affects all of us on very profound levels and I think what Rey was trying to say about terrorism is that this is exactly the wrong approach to asymmetrical warfare this kind of violence is also used as a tactic in revolutionary situations Castro would go Bautista Bautista would over respond making himself enemies and Castro friends and if you fall into that trap in your response I mean the two examples I think you should look at historically

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I think you should look at historically are Ireland and Israel in Ireland when the conditions improve when there's amelioration when there's more representation and democratic input from people people who are hopeless anymore they're not in despair then the violent elements come to the negotiating table on the other hand if it's just a cycle of violence you can't get out of it and the only way to and terrorism in the world is to eventually restore justice so in closing again I want to thank you all for coming I want to thank the National Press Club c-span Jules Aronson Matthew cielito Ray McGovern Barry Zelman he also made a statement I

had forgotten mentioned that we also pasted his post a statement on our website again you can visit us at www.fortuigence.com and comprehensive report in response to the 9/11 Commission report being released today thank you very much

01:00:14 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v8t0ixeJkqY&t=3614s)

[Music] you can read the September 11 Commission report

END